ties depend upon the species of plant from which the sap has been taken. For example, lime made from the sap of the “Gum” tree is very tough and may cause injury to the bird, while that made from the sap of the breadfruit, “bredeboom melki”, is rather soft and may not have sufficient strength to hold the bird. With these facts in mind, the birdcatcher goes to work and makes a mixture of the two to obtain the desired consistency. The addition of vinegar, lime juice, or tallow, when boiling, imparts to the birdlime certain properties. Some boys chew the viscous mass, believing that its quality is thereby improved.

Birdlime made from the “Melki-tetei” is excellent. This liane grows in the forests in the vicinity of Paramaribo. It is impossible to pull these bush-ropes down from their moorings in the forest roof, so the trapper simply takes what he can reach from the ground or by easy climbing. This he cuts up into smaller pieces and scrapes off the sap that oozes out at the ends.

Some birdcatchers cultivate the “Gum” tree and Breadfruit in their fields or gardens. An old Breadfruit tree with its trunk scarred almost beyond recognition by countless cuts and slashes, received during many years of its useful life, is truly a pathetic sight.

In applying the birdlime it is carefully wound, not smeared, on a twig or stick, or an umbrella rib. First, however, the birdcatcher takes the precaution to moisten the stick so that he may afterwards remove the sticky substance more easily. For the same reason he also wets his fingers while handling the “tara”. The umbrella rib is much in favor, because the birdlime can be more easily removed from it without loss than from the wood. The stick covered with birdlime is called a “tara-tiki” (tarred stick). Usually it is from 30 to 40 cm. long, the thickness depending upon the species the birdcatcher is after. For the Euphonias and small seed-eaters the umbrella rib is just right. When not in use the “tara” is put in a bottle of water, where it will keep a short time without spoiling, care being taken to change the water from time to time.